

Advocacy Self-Assessment:

Here is a simple survey (based on a model from the National Association of State Arts Agencies) to assess your organization's level of Advocacy involvement and preparedness. Your organizations should be able to answer yes to most of the questions (see ranking at end). Take a moment and see if you are doing what you might do in this area:

My organization:

Has a strong relationship with our:

City Council members	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Our Mayor	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Board of Supervisors	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
State Legislators	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
School Board members	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Special state legislative caucuses	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
The Governor	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Has a process to regularly brief / inform elected officials as to the value the organization brings to the community? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Schedules a meeting with elected officials at least once a year?

	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
More than once a year	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Regularly invites elected officials to scheduled events / performances, exhibitions? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Regularly provides locally elected officials with an arts calendar or information about the organization's arts attractions and events?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Sends a copy of the Annual Report to elected officials?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Provides other written materials to elected officials?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Seeks out newly elected officials to solicit their support for the arts?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Regularly finds ways for elected officials to increase their profile with our organization and its members/audiences, such as having officials introduce performances, bestow awards for arts achievement et. al.)

☐ Yes ☐ No

Board of Directors:

Invites elected officials to address our board meetings:

___Yes ___No

Includes advocacy in the Board job description?

___Yes ___No

Recruits corporate leaders with political contacts for the Board?

___Yes ___No

Trains new board members to develop their advocacy skills?

___Yes ___No

Has a standing Advocacy Subcommittee of the Board of Directors?

___Yes ___No

Includes advocacy news / reports as a regular item on the Board meeting agenda?

___Yes ___No

Encourages Board members to develop personal relationships with elected officials?

___Yes ___No

Endorses candidates who support the arts for office?

___Yes ___No

Communication:

Includes in its regular newsletter or other contact with its constituent base a regular column or information on legislative issues important to the arts?

___Yes ___No

Collaborates with other arts organizations within the city / county to maximize political clout?

___Yes ___No

Meets regularly with advocacy representatives of other arts organizations?

___Yes ___No

Participates in local / state advocacy efforts?

___Yes ___No

Meets regularly with local media (editorial boards) to promote endorsement of the value of the arts to the community?

___Yes ___No

Actively encourages client / constituent base (including audiences) to advocate for arts support? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Has an advocacy section on its website? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Has materials / tool-kit explaining how to advocate for people interested in helping? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Reaches out and works collaboratively with stakeholder organizations who can help drum up support for the arts (e.g., PTA, AARP, etc.,) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Recognizes and thanks elected officials for their support? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Political:

Has a process to inquire “candidate” positions on the arts during election cycles? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Encourages member base to work on campaigns of candidates who support the arts? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Actively supports “pro Arts” legislation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Explains to its board, staff and client base the IRS rules governing advocacy for non profit organizations? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Score:

24 to 30 Yes answers: Congratulations your organization has an exemplary Advocacy program and ranks at the top in being politically savvy.

19 to 23 Yes answers: Your organization is in the higher ranks of Advocacy preparedness and action.

15 to 19 Yes answers: Your organization is half-way there.

10 to 15 Yes answers: You have some of the basics down, but you really need to work on it more.

5 to 10 Yes answers:

You've scratched the surface, but you have a long way to go.

0 to 5 Yes answers:

You don't have an advocacy strategy or program.
Your organization has zero political clout.